

**LARGE AND SMALL COASTAL SHARK  
COMMERCIAL QUOTAS SET AT 1997 LEVELS;  
COMMERCIAL LARGE COASTAL SHARK FISHERY  
TO CLOSE ON APRIL 15, 2002**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is implementing an emergency rule that will maintain the commercial large coastal shark (LCS) quota at the 1997 level of 1,285 metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw); maintain the small coastal shark (SCS) commercial quota at the 1997 level of 1,760 mt dw; suspend the regulations on the ridgeback LCS minimum size, counting dead discards and state landings after Federal closures against Federal quotas, and season-specific quota adjustments for LCS and SCS pending the results of the new stock assessment; and establish a regulation that adjusts the LCS or SCS quota based on the previous season's landings. To receive copies of the emergency rule or its environmental assessment and regulatory impact review, please contact Margo Schulze-Haugen or Karyl Brewster-Geisz at (301) 713-2347. Comments will be accepted through March 28, 2002, at 5 p.m.

The commercial shark fisheries for all species groups will open on January 1, 2002. The semi-annual quotas are:

<b>Species Group</b>	<b>Semi-annual quota level</b>
LCS	735.5 mt dw
SCS	880 mt dw
Blue sharks	136.5 mt dw
Porbeagle sharks	46 mt dw
Pelagic sharks other than blue or porbeagle	244 mt dw

The **commercial fishery for LCS will close on April 15, 2002, 11:30 p.m. local time.** This action is necessary to ensure that the semiannual quota for LCS of 735.5 mt dw for the period January 1 through June 30, 2002, is not exceeded. Closure dates for the SCS, blue, porbeagle, and pelagic shark fisheries will be determined at a later date, as necessary.

During a closure, retention of, fishing for, possessing or selling LCS are prohibited for persons fishing aboard vessels issued a limited access permit under 50 CFR 635.4. The sale, purchase, trade, or barter of carcasses and/or fins of LCS harvested by a person aboard a vessel that has been issued a permit under 50 CFR 635.4 are prohibited, except for those that were harvested, offloaded, and sold, traded, or bartered prior to the closure and were held in storage by a dealer or processor.

This FAX notice is a courtesy to Atlantic Shark Fisheries interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Margo Schulze-Haugen or Karyl Brewster-Geisz, 301-713-2347.

Chris Rogers for \_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce C. Morehead  
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

December 26, 2001